

Landscape

Edward L. Mayo

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(for Karl Mattern)

Edward L. Mayo

This poem appeared in the Iowa English Yearbook, Fall, 1961. It is included in Selected Poems, The Prairie Press, 1973.

Mattern's picture, Myra,
The one we saw at the one-man exhibition
Three years ago—remember?
Remember how it looked like heaped-on-canvas
Paint piled anyhow when we were going the rounds,

But when we were half way
Out of the gallery,
Glancing back casually,
We looked into an endless garden, a world
Depth beyond depth white, crimson, green, green-gold
And sun-gold everywhere,

A world we know is there
Because the enduring painter,
Wielding his brushes as a crab its claws
Clipped and hung on to it though light withdraws
Even as you stand and stare?

And as the lifting up of sky in spring
Enlarges men within and they grow taller
In its blue eye, so we before this thing
We could not enter, no, nor even the painter
Whose brain beheld, whose brushes took forever
The landscape all men dream of entering.

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